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## THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF JUNIOR COLLEGES IN THE UNITED STATES.

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In spite of every effort to fix conditions, we are and shall continue to be face to face with the fact that the evolution of education can not be checked. The public junior college is as distinctly the last response to a last step taken in the development of public education as was the secondary school a last step in the development of public education.

We have put into our laws something like this: That the years from 6 to 21 may be devoted to education. In other words, it is just as legal for a young man or young woman to demand education at public expense at the age of 20 or 21 as it is for him or her to demand it at the age of 15 or 16.

It was on that basis that the Public Junior College was established in Joliet, Ill., in 1902. Joliet takes no particular credit for it, but concedes it to the man of vision, Dr. William H. Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago. Superintendent Soldan, of St. Louis, President Butler, of Columbia University, and one or two others met at the University of Chicago in 1899, and during that meeting clearly set forth that the first two years of college is secondary school work. I think they had largely in mind the school of arts and sciences, as the majority of colleges confined their work to this field. They said, Why should not centers be established where the first two years of college work should be given? Accordingly a junior college was started at Joliet with five or six students, and it grew in that community because the junior college is largely a local community proposition.

The development at Joliet was slow at first, but it was continuous, and did not stop for a moment any more than the development of the public high schools, which was slow at the beginning but did not stop for a moment. When we consider that it is only about 70 years since the very first high school was established, and that within the past 30 years the secondary schools have developed 500 per cent, it becomes apparent that the evolution of education will have to stop unless there is provided a way to care for the large number of

boys and girls of 17 and 18 years of age who are graduating from our high schools. In order to care for them it has been suggested that junior colleges can be started under the guidance and supervision of the State universities and that too for the sake of the State university as well as for the sake of the boys and girls in the various communities.

We are face to face with the knowledge that of the 450,000 students attending colleges, something over one-half of that number are attending private institutions. It is very difficult for the private educational institution to develop so as to increase the number of people it can care for. The only other avenue through which it can be done is the public educational system. The State of California passed the first direct law providing for the junior colleges, and it probably has more well-developed junior colleges than any The State of California passed the first direct law providing for the junior colleges in Missouri or other States, but I am sure of the junior colleges in California. For years they have faced there the problem of caring for the young men, the young women, and the boys and girls graduating from the high schools, and I think it is in a way a defense for the State that these junior colleges were established by law. There is, however, local defense for their development in any State where a law clearly sets forth that the age limit is between 5 and 21 years. There is no difference between a young man and a young woman of 17 and 18 and 21 so far as education is concerned; and if the secondary work has been finished at 17 years and the young man or woman desires to remain in the public educational institution no law should prevent it.

Within the past year all the universities, public and private, have probably the largest number of students that have ever attended colleges in this country. Something has to be done. We have not been able to do very much during the time we have been at war; building has not gone on in cities and towns as it did before the war.

The best of care for the high-school boys and girls is provided in the junior college, either public or private. It is clear that there will not be developed more than one State university of the same kind in any State, but there is nothing to prevent the establishment of larger and larger numbers of public junior colleges in any State where the private junior colleges already established are insufficient to take care of the young people who wish to go to college.

Now, I think I would be unfair if I did not say another word about the development of the public junior college upward. In cities of 100,000, such as Akron and Toledo, Ohio, and others like Cincinnati and St. Louis, there is no reason why a junior college, established in such a center, should not develop into a college or a technical university supported at public expense. That is the direction of the trend to-day, a trend that will be encouraged; and I am willing to be responsible for the statement that we shall never have too large a number of well-trained men and women graduates from good colleges and universities. Too large a number will not be possible because they will drop out when they reach their intellectual level.

A public junior college, with a local atmosphere and with local support and with the support based on the age limit, is as surely one of the avenues through which public education will develop within the next generation as it was that the high schools from 1890 to 1920 grew by such leaps and bounds as caused Doctor Judd to say they grew 500 per cent in that time. It is the only avenue through which public education can satisfy itself and through which young men and women can have their opportunity in college.